

II. Part of a Letter from Mr Ralph Thoresby,  
F. R. S. concerning Pewter Money, Coynd in Ire-  
land, by the late King James.

Leeds, June 7. 1704.

Honoured Sir,

THIS brings you an account of a Curiosity that re-  
lates to the late King James's *Irish* Moneys, which  
I am apt to think you never heard of, viz. a *Crown*  
*piece of Pewter*, inscribed *Melioris tessera fati*. 'Twas sent  
me by the Gentleman who found them in the Treasury  
at *Dublin*; whose account is so particular and curious,  
that I will choose to give it you in his own words.  
" That King James, having turned all the Brass Guns of  
" *Ireland*, and all the Brass and Copper Vessels of Pro-  
" testants that he could seize, into Coyn, viz. Half-  
" Crowns somewhat bigger than an *English* Half-penny,  
" Shillings broader, but not so thick as a Farthing, and  
" Six pences in proportion; it was order'd to pass cur-  
" rent in all Payments, even in Bonds, and discharge of  
" Judgments and Statutes; (insomuch that if Ages to  
" come knew not the reason, they would admire to be  
" told, that there was a time when men absconded, to  
" avoid receiving their Debts, as many here did :) But  
" these stocks of Metal being all spent ( which he began  
" to Coyn in June 1689. and no Circulation to bring  
" them back into his Treasury, he call'd in all that he  
" had Coynd, and the Half-Crowns, which before  
" were

( 1876 )

“ were stamped with a Face, were re-stamped with his  
“ *Effigies* on Horseback, and then paid out to those who  
“ brought them in, as Crowns; and the smaller, Coyns  
“ were melted down, and re-coyned again under the  
“ same Denominations, but with less Metal. After the  
“ turn was served by this Stratagem, he had not where-  
“ withal to import Copper and Brass; but, for want of  
“ it, fell foul on the Pewter Dishes, &c. — And the  
“ piece I sent you of that Metal was Coyned for five  
“ Shillings; and the Proclamation to make it passable  
“ was as ready as the Stamps, for it was prepared: But  
“ King *William* passing the *Boyne*, prevented their Pro-  
“ claiming it. There was very little of it Coyned, for  
“ our Government could meet with none of it; until  
“ one day, rummaging all their Tinkerly Treasure, that  
“ they had left behind them in *Dublin* when they were  
“ routed, by accident I met with one Bag of 150 of those  
“ Pieces. So that the Piece I sent you, altho it's of no Intrin-  
“ sick Value, it's a Rarity; and had I thought it would  
“ have been acceptable, I would have sent you a Specimen  
“ of every sort that he had Coyned and Re-coyned  
“ here. I am,

Sir,

Your very Humble Servant,

Dublin, Novemb.  
the 27th, 1696.

Tho. Putland.

This Valuable Curiosity has the same Inscription on both sides, as the common Brass Crowns; but there is this Legend added upon the Rim of it, *MELIORIS TESSERA FATI ANNO REGNI SEXTO*,